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ABSTRACT

The results of a conference on the delivery of vocational education to handicapped students in New Jersey are presented. After an introductory section detailing the organization of the conference, addresses by T. McNulty on the need for collaboration in the vocational education of handicapped children and J. Richardson on the need for collaboration among parents, child study team members, and vocational educators are provided. The third section reports on small group sessions which considered the status of individualized educational programs (IEPs). Observations of individual and team sessions by G. Bingham and M. Huang from the viewpoint of a special educator and a vocational educator respectively are recorded in the fourth section. Conclusions and recommendations offered in the final section include the need for better management of the IEP process. Among appendixes are the guiding statements for individual team member sessions, the recorder's log sheet form, and a list of additional parent concerns and recommendations. (PHR)

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Servicing the Handicapped...

A REPORT ON

SERVICING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

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SERVING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:
A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

A Report on the

New Jersey Invitational Conference
for Teams of Parents, Vocational Educators,
and Child Study Personnel

May 17, 1979

by

Leonard Albright
and
Thurman Hux

Department of Vocational-Technical Education
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Preface i

SECTION 1: ORGANIZATION OF CONFERENCE 1

Introduction 1

Conference Planning Considerations 1

District Representation 1

Team Identification Procedures 2

The Conference Program 3

SECTION 2: CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS 5

The Need for Collaboration Among Parents, Child Study Team Members, and Vocational Educators,
James W. Richardson 5

The Need for Collaboration in Vocational Programming for Handicapped Students,
Thomas F. McNulty 7

SECTION 3: STATUS OF IEP DEVELOPMENT: INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM CONCERNS ... 11

Individual Team Member Sessions 11

Procedures 11

Parent Concerns and Recommendations 11

Vocational Educator Concerns and Recommendations 13

Child Study Member Concerns and Recommendations 14

IEP Team Sessions 15

Procedures 15

Team Concerns and Recommendations 15

SECTION 4: OBSERVATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SESSIONS 17

Perspectives of a Special Educator,
Grace Bingham 17

Perspectives of a Vocational Educator,
May W. Huang 21

(continued)

SECTION 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 25

APPENDIX A: Conference Planning Committee Members and Supportive Agencies 27

APPENDIX B: Letter of Invitation 29

APPENDIX C: Roster of Conference Participants 35

APPENDIX D: Guiding Statements for Individual Team Member Sessions 39

APPENDIX E: Recorder's Log Sheet 41

APPENDIX F: Additional Parent Concerns and Recommendations 43

APPENDIX G: Additional Vocational Educator Concerns and Recommendations 45

APPENDIX H: Additional Concerns and Recommendations by Child Study Personnel 47

APPENDIX I: Guiding Statements for Team Sessions 49

APPENDIX J: Additional Concerns and Recommendations of IEP Teams 51

PREFACE

This report is a result of a conference concerned with the delivery of vocational education to handicapped students in the State of New Jersey. The specific thrust of this conference was to identify present practices and concerns of child study team representatives, parents, and vocational educators in designing and implementing individualized education programs (IEPs) for handicapped students in vocational education. An underlying theme was that communication and cooperation among parents, vocational educators, and child study personnel are essential ingredients in the delivery of quality vocational education to individuals with handicaps.

It is hoped that this report will be of value to the following persons: (1) state department of education personnel who are involved in career-vocational programming for handicapped students, (2) university teacher educators in special and vocational education, especially those responsible for providing inservice education, (3) regional and local education agency personnel, and (4) concerned parents. If the information contained here is found by these individuals to help in expanding and improving vocational programs and services for handicapped persons, then it will have accomplished its purpose.

The New Jersey Invitational Conference and this resulting report were made possible through the support and assistance of many individuals and several agencies. Paul Mozenter, Dean Garwood, Bill Friedel, Dave Winikur, and Richard Ruebling offered much help in their role as conference planning committee members.

Our sincere appreciation is extended to the persons who served as group facilitators and recorders during the conference. A listing of these individuals can be found in Appendix C.

We are grateful to three representatives of the New Jersey Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel, Phyllis Cohen, Lorraine Polding, and Richard Summers, for their help in handling the conference registration and the distribution of this report.

A very special note of gratitude is due Jim Richardson, Tom McNulty, Grace Bingham, and May Huang for their presentations during the conference.

The staff of the Department of Vocational-Technical Education, under the direction of Dr. Annell Simcoe, contributed greatly to the conference effort. Secretaries Rose Scott, Karen Richter, and Carol Esso provided important assistance in making the conference arrangements. Ms. Richter deserves special commendation for her assistance in preparing this report.

Finally, the authors of this document and the conference planning members are indebted to the conference participants. Their willingness to share ideas and their enthusiasm toward addressing the topic of this conference made May 17, 1979 a very special day.

Leonard Albright
Thurman Hux

July, 1979

ORGANIZATION OF CONFERENCE

Introduction

The New Jersey Invitational Conference was in response to a need for examining the status of individualized education program (IEP) development for handicapped students in vocational education. Essentially, the need for this particular conference emerged from several recent and interrelated forces:

the targeting of career and vocational education for handicapped students as a high priority item by federal, state, and local education agencies; hence, signifying a movement toward expansion and improvement of programming in this area;

an increased emphasis on educating exceptional students in "least restrictive environments"; which implies that handicapped persons will now have greater access to a wider range of vocational programs and services, and

the federal mandate that an IEP be developed for each school-aged handicapped student; thereby indicating the need for closer working relationships among persons involved in the IEP process such as child study personnel, parents, and vocational educators.

Recognizing these developments, the organizers of the May 17 conference (see Appendix A for listing of planning committee members) were guided by three primary considerations. A discussion of each is presented in the following section.

Conference Planning Considerations

An initial consideration of the planning committee was to determine the present state of affairs in IEP development. Baseline information was considered essential for determining future programmatic efforts. This consideration, which proved to be a major goal of the conference, was felt to be critical in the area of vocational programming for handicapped students; an area that has experienced considerable growth and change in a relatively short period of time.

In order to obtain pertinent and timely information, the second consideration was that knowledge of existing practices should be obtained from among those who are to have a direct role in developing IEPs for handicapped students in vocational education. Namely, child study members, parents, and vocational educators. The committee felt that the May 17 conference should provide a forum for representatives from these three groups to exchange ideas and examine needs and also offer, by means of this report, pertinent information to others responsible for planning programs related to vocational education for handicapped students.

The third key consideration had to do with the format of the conference. Since the main focus was on obtaining insight from those who are "on-the-line," it was felt that ample opportunity should be provided for participant input. Therefore, the conference would include two group sessions; one session for individual IEP team members of like position (i.e., parent groups, child study groups, and vocational educator groups) and a second session for IEP team interaction. The first session would provide a structure wherein individual participants could discuss their involvement in IEP development. The second session would offer a setting in which small groups of IEP teams from various school districts could come together to exchange information on team practices and needs.

District Representation

A total of 16 district teams were invited to the conference. Of this number, 15 teams accepted the invitation and participated in the day's activities.

Since the delivery of vocational education for handicapped students occurs in a variety of educational

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settings, the teams represented at the conference came from: (1) area vocational-technical schools (both full and shared-time), (2) comprehensive high schools in urban, suburban, and rural districts, (3) county special services district, and (4) non-public school settings (i.e., sheltered workshops). A breakdown of teams representing the various settings is shown below:

Setting	Number of Teams
1. Comprehensive High Schools	7
2. Comprehensive High School/Sheltered Workshop Mix	2
3. Area Vocational-Technical Schools	5
4. County Special Services District	1
	Total 15

Team Identification Procedures

The districts were identified by the conference planning committee, with each district receiving a personal invitation from individual committee members. The person initially contacted within each district varied somewhat, but generally the contact was made with the director of vocational education or the director of special services. An official letter of invitation followed the initial contact. A description of the conference goals, team selection criteria and confirmation procedures was included in this mailing. A sample of this correspondence appears in Appendix B.

After receiving the letter of invitation, the contact person was asked to select the participating team. The team was to consist of three persons from the district (i.e., parent, vocational educator, child study person). These persons were to have had prior involvement in IEP development.

A complete listing of the team participants, by district, is shown in Appendix C.

The Conference Program

The conference program consisted of four major sessions. The first session presented the need for collaborative planning, as seen by the directors of special education and special vocational education programs in the New Jersey Department of Education. The second session consisted of small group meetings for individual team members. Small group team meetings consumed the third session. The fourth session was based on observations of the day's activities by a special educator and a vocational educator from Rutgers University.

The conference program appears on the following pages. Subsequent sections of this report present, in sequential order, the day's events.

PROGRAM

New Jersey Invitational Conference on
Serving Handicapped Students in Vocational Education:
A Collaborative Effort

Rutgers University
May 17, 1979

8:00 - 8:30 a.m. ..... Registration, Room 100, Milledoler Hall

SESSION I: ..... THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION AMONG PARENTS, CHILD STUDY TEAM MEMBERS AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. ..... Lecture Hall, Milledoler Hall

Welcome: ..... Leonard Albright
Conference Coordinator

Introductions: ..... Paul Mozenter
President, N. J. Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel (NJAVESNP)

Presenters: ..... James W. Richardson, Director, Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
Division of School Programs
N. J. State Department of Education

Thomas F. McNulty, Director, Bureau of Special Programs
Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation
N. J. State Department of Education

9:30 - 9:45 a.m. ..... Orientation to Small Group Sessions

Thurman Hux
Conference Assistant

9:45 - 10:00 a.m. ..... Break

SESSION II: ..... INVOLVEMENT AND CONCERNS OF IEP TEAM MEMBERS

10:00 - 11:45 a.m. Homogeneous Group Sessions
Milledoler and Murray Halls

Group	Meeting Site	Facilitator
Parents, Group A	Room 111 Murray Hall	Joe Wilberscheid Freehold Regional High School
Parents, Group B	Room 100 Milledoler Hall	Thurman Hux - Rutgers University
Vocational Teachers, Group A	Room 113 Murray Hall	Mari Haupt Middlesex County
Vocational Teachers, Group B	Room 114 Murray Hall	Katie Gibson Somerset County
Child Study Members, Group A	Room 116 Murray Hall	Bob Gray Ocean County
Child Study Members, Group B	Room 115 Murray Hall	Dick Scott N. J. Department of Education

(continued)

11:45 - 12:45 p.m.	Lunch Queens Campus Mall
SESSION III:	IEP TEAM PRACTICES, PROBLEMS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
12:45 - 2:30 p.m.	Small Group Sessions for IEP Teams — Murray Hall

Group	Meeting Site	Facilitator
Group 1 (4 teams)	Room 111	Katie Gibson
Group 2 (3 teams)	Room 113	Dick Scott
Group 3 (4 teams)	Room 114	Mari Haupt
Group 4 (4 teams)	Room 115	Bob Gray
2:30 - 2:45 p.m.	Break	

SESSION IV:	OBSERVATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SESSIONS
2:45 - 3:30 p.m.	ROOM 100, Milledoler Hall
Observer Reaction:	Grace Bingham Assistant Professor, Special Education Department of Educational Psychology Graduate School of Education Rutgers University
	May Huang Assistant Professor, Department of Vocational-Technical Education Graduate School of Education Rutgers University
Concluding Remarks:	Leonard Albright
3:30 p.m.	Adjournment

THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION AMONG PARENTS, CHILD STUDY TEAM MEMBERS, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATORS

2

This section contains abridged versions of two presentations delivered during the first part of the conference program. These speeches were given by two members of the New Jersey Department of Education: James W. Richardson, Director of Special Education, and Thomas F. McNulty, Director of Special Vocational Education Programs.

The presentations by both gentlemen "set the stage" for the day's activities, providing the participants with an update on recent developments in vocational programming for handicapped students in New Jersey and discussion related to the need for collaboration in this area.

The Need for Collaboration Among Parents, Child Study Team Members, and Vocational Educators

James W. Richardson
Director, Bureau of Special Education and
Pupil Personnel Services
Division of School Programs
N. J. State Department of Education

When you look back to find out when vocational education in New Jersey became available for the handicapped, you do not have to go back very far. Basically, it was not available on a statewide scale until the early seventies. It was during this period that the Department of Education indicated the responsibility of all public vocational schools in our State to provide programs for handicapped students.

Today, each vocational and special school in the State offers programs to meet the unique needs of the handicapped. While the quality of some of these programs is questioned, there has been and still is a positive response by our schools to the need and call for quality vocational education. Let's examine some aspects of key legislative initiatives currently affecting vocational education for the handicapped in our State.

Legislation for the Handicapped

Federal legislation was passed in 1975 to strengthen the response of schools to the needs of the handicapped. This legislation, PL 94-142, *The Education for All Handicapped Children's Act*, set out to guarantee the right of each school-aged handicapped student to a free and appropriate educational program. In doing so, it clearly defined the roles of school people and parents in providing educational opportunities for the handicapped.

The New Jersey State Board of Education approved new rules and regulations for public schools in August of 1978. These rules brought New Jersey into compliance with the federal law and expanded the responsibilities previously called for on the part of public schools in our State. As a result, parents play a more critical role in determining the educational needs of their children through involvement in the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The due process procedures contained in the rules and regulations indicate what a parent or school district can do if either party is not fulfilling its educational responsibility for the handicapped pupil. Teachers, who used to be the last to know what was going on in regard to a child, are now part of the process of decision making and program planning for every potentially handicapped pupil in our State. Every handicapped pupil, not just a selected few as has been done in the past, must have available to them the vocational programs necessary to meet the

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goals established and agreed to by parents and school personnel.

While the past few years have been encouraging, there is a tremendous need for expansion of the vocational programs presently offered and for the development of new programs to meet the vocational education needs of handicapped pupils, as they are identified through the IEP process. Federal dollars have and continue to play a major role in this program expansion and development. Under the Division of Vocational Education and the Division of School Programs, priorities related to vocational programs for the handicapped have been set and project dollars have been earmarked for this important area.

The Challenge

Vocational schools and vocational personnel must recognize the pressures being placed on them by parents and school district personnel and must respond by working cooperatively with all parties to find solutions to such problems as space, personnel, new programs, program quotas, and graduation requirements.

Local district child study teams must also become more familiar with the programs that are presently available within vocational schools in order to design individualized plans which are more realistic and which can be addressed in the vocational programs presently being provided or planned.

No longer can a single entity make decisions and develop programs in isolation. It is important to remember that teachers, parents, administrators, child study teams, and other specialists all play an increasingly important role in the development of vocational programs which are designed specifically to meet the educational needs of the handicapped in our State.

New Jersey has recognized the need for cooperative decision making and is moving toward the goal of a free and appropriate educational program for all handicapped students in our State. This conference, which involves child study teams, parents, and vocational teachers, is providing an additional vehicle for exploring mutual problems and for developing possible solutions. What is accomplished here will have a direct affect on the level of services provided the handicapped in New Jersey. I hope that this collaborative effort is seen by each of you as an important step in linking what we believe is right to what we are actually doing in vocational education for the handicapped in our State.

You have been given a major task to complete today. We are looking forward to the results of your efforts. I thank you in advance for helping us in our goal of providing quality vocational education to handicapped students throughout New Jersey.

The Need for Collaboration in Vocational Education for Handicapped Students

Thomas F. McNulty
Director, Bureau of Special Programs
Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation
N. J. State Department of Education

Let me reinforce Jim's statements with several thoughts concerning vocational programming for handicapped students in New Jersey.

In Washington there is a man in the U.S. Office of Education's Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped who has a vocational education background. His name is William Halloran. One of Bill's statements is that "If a special education program, with vocational overtones succeeds, the key element in that success will most often be identified as ongoing communication between the director of vocational education and the director of special education." And that simple fact is about all you can observe about it. The difference between successful liaisons and unsuccessful ones are that those two people talk to one another.

We, in the vocational education division, have been able to do that with special education informally. We've had an excellent informal communications system set up for years between the vocational division and the various branches of special education. We've spent about 13 years trying to formalize that relationship, and I think we're about ready to do it. We have some written statements saying that the two assistant commissioners will cooperate; consequently, their divisions are going to be forced to cooperate. Some persons would rather not, but in any event, we do have some kind of a formal relationship or liaison now.

Area Vocational-Technical Schools

You should know that the area vocational-technical schools (AVTS's) are kind of johnny-come-lately's to the service of the handicapped. They're probably the last group of vocational educators to get aboard that system in any formal way. We had very, very few takers in the early days. Some problems still remain in the way AVTS's deal with the handicapped. For example, to this day, at least 80 percent of the vocational education provided to the handicapped is provided outside the county vocational system. So when we're talking about developling effective ways to provide vocational training for the handicapped, we've got to be talking about all the kids in all the delivery services not just the vocational schools.

Our Basic Function

Jim reinforced the idea that the bottomline for the handicapped is to get and hold a job. That's what our function is, the function of the division of vocational education. Whatever your functions are, our function is to see that the handicapped person gets and holds a job in line with his or her interests, aptitudes, and abilities. A tough thing to do because we're not just talking about a school system that has had some problems doing that job, but we're also talking about business and industry out there, who also have had problems dealing with the handicapped. If we had a good interface between the school and business and industry, that process would be much easier. We do have some cooperative education coordinators who do that, who are providing that relationship—get the school and the industry to work together for the handicapped. It is not an easy task, however, to have a handicapped person employed and holding that job for a long period of time given what we have to work with. I'm talking now about the schools' training, and I'm talking about business and industry's fixations and attitudes.

Vocational Education as an Ancillary Service

You have to remember that, in the delivery of vocational education for handicapped students, special education runs the system. Vocational education is ancillary—it's a patch on. Vocational educators are not calling the shots. The students are identified and their programs are set up. Then a referral is made

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to an educational program that will meet those student needs. All this is accomplished by special education. They are in charge of the system. The student comes to us as a referral. Generally, we don't go out and recruit handicapped students into vocational education. What we do is try to educate the special education system to understand that vocational education has some advantages and some disadvantages.

Barriers to Placement in Vocatonal Education

Over the years we've had difficulties with placing handicapped students due to the attitudes of vocational teachers and the attitudes of industrial arts teachers. I spoke to a group if industrial arts teachers about a year ago, and they were very upset about the fact that Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act says that handicapped students will have access to all programs that any other student has access to. They said, "You mean to tell me that they're going to send these kids indiscriminately into my classroom and that I can't say anything about it." That has been their bag for years. I know when I was an IA teacher some years ago, that was one of the ways the industrial arts guys had of keeping those handicapped kids out of their classes. It was to say that the handicapped students would be a safety hazard not only to themselves but to everyone else in the class. It's an old gag. We have problems of that kind to this day. If you don't know about them, you're blind. We're going to have to break them down—together we're going to have to break them down.

Active Role in IEP Development

In talking to that industrial arts group, I pointed out their role in the development of IEPs for handicapped students. I said that with the new IEP system, the IEP would divide the basic plan into two parts: (1) identify where the student is now, the present level of performance; and (2) involve the people who are going to instruct them in the future in establishing long and short-range objectives. That's the way it reads in the state rules and regulation. In addition, I told those industrial arts teachers that if they had handicapped children, they had best be around when that basic plan section was written so they could tell the next teachers where the kid was—and if they were going to get this student into their class as a new student, they'd better be involved in the IEP process so that together with special educators an effective educational plan could be written.

What happens when a kid falls or fails in an industrial arts or a shop program? Everyone fails at one time or another. Everyone goes down the drain at one time or another. What are you going to do about it? It's especially true of the handicapped child. He/she has difficulty in shop and starts to falter. If the shop teachers had been involved with the IEP from the beginning, this failure may have been prevented. I've said that all along.

The thing I hear the most is that, hell, we can't involve all those teachers who have previously not had anything to do with that kid in IEP development. That's the thing I hear now. It is often said that both logistically and cost effectively we can't do that. Do you want to run an IEP program in the interest of specific needs of kids or do you want to talk about what's cost effective?

I'm going to tell you what you should do—you should be involved. Special educators and vocational educators should write an IEP together. Special educators should not ignore the expertise that's there. Worse yet, is to ignore the fact that vocational educators, who don't have a heck of alot of experiences with the handicapped, need help from you desperately. Don't give them psychological reports and tell them all those wonders that you learned in a book somewhere in a special education class. Give them something that has some meaning so they can help the student.

Our statistics tell us that there are large numbers of unserved handicapped kids that are not getting anything from the vocational programs. Whether this stems from a lack of programs or a lack of understanding of how to get handicapped kids into programs, I don't really know. I do know that there are many, many unserved handicapped children in this State in terms of vocational education. I know

(continued)

they're not all going to MIT. I know that the majority of those that are unserved desperately need some kind of help from a combination special education/vocational education system.

Assessment and Training Must Go Together

I guess the real thing should be that you maximize the student's potential, and to maximize the student's potential there are two thing you have to know. One, obviously, what is his/her potential, and when it comes to vocational education there are very few people in special education who have any idea what a student's vocational potential is. So you've got to put together ways of doing that, determining what a student's vocational potential is. We have some outstanding examples of how to do that in this state. A couple of those people are in this room. One thing I did learn as a bureaucrat, when there's an expert in the room, talk about something else. And there are a couple here. And the second thing is that if you're going to maximize the student's potential you've got to have some kind of program for the student. You can have the greatest assessment program in the world, but if you don't have the training programs to go with it, what use is it? We do alot of that baloney too in this state. We have student assessment programs up to the ears, and you put the kid in the assessment program and when he or she comes out they say the student should do this, this, this, and that and there are no programs for training. Know places like that? I do!

So two things you have to have; you have to know where the kid's going vocationally and, secondly, you have to have something for him or her to go to.

Now's there's a difference between providing an introductory kind of readiness program and providing specific tough directed occupational training for the handicapped. We've got to stop being soft about it! I believe you'll find that vocational educators are tough, and the reason they're tough is because they insist on quality and they insist on results. That's probably one of the reasons why they don't want the handicapped students in their classes—they're afraid they can't be tough and they can't demand results. But I'm saying they can. If they do, then we can be successful at it. What we should not do is sacrifice the basic principles of the vocational program as an excuse for accommodating the handicapped. We should continue to demand tough, productive, and quality programs. If you spend some time putting a program together properly, thinking it over, and being committed to it, the program will succeed.

I guess that's the sum total of my message. I hope I've angered some of you, I hope I've disturbed some of you. It's been a pleasure. Keep up the good work!

STATUS OF IEP DEVELOPMENT: INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM CONCERNS

This section presents procedures and outcomes of the small group sessions for individuals of like position (i.e., Session II of program) and for the IEP teams (i.e., Session III).

SECTION 3

INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBER SESSIONS

Procedures

The primary purpose of Session II was to provide small group settings for individual team members to identify, discuss, and reflect upon existing practices related to development, implementation, and review of IEPs. It was planned that as a function of this process, specific concerns and recommendations for improvement would be identified.

Members from each of the 15 teams were divided, by position, into small groups. Thus, separate meetings were held by parents, vocational teachers, and child study personnel. A total of six meetings were held concurrently, with two meetings per position type.

Leadership for each group was provided by a group facilitator. Each session was structured in the following manner:

1. Participants reviewed a guiding statement for each phase of the IEP process (i.e., initial development, implementation, and review). The series of guiding statements for parents, child study team members, and vocational instructors appears in Appendix D.
2. The participants were asked to review each statement to determine its appropriateness as an expression of ideal IEP practices. This was then followed by discussion of existing practices in contrast to the statement of ideal practices.
3. The participants were asked to identify and prioritize areas of concerns in relation to IEP practices and then offer recommendtions for improvement.

The facilitators of the six groups are listed in the conference program in Section I and in the conference roster in Appendix C.

As the discussion proceeded, a recorder in each group listed the concensus viewpoint for each item of concern and recommendation for improvement. The format for recording this information is shown in Appendix E. The recorders for the small group sessions are identified in Appendix C.

Parent Concerns and Recommendations

Parents from the conference teams were divided into two small groups. The concerns and recommendations that surfaced in both groups are listed in Table I on the following page.

As the information in Table I suggests, parent concerns focused on two areas: (1) lack of ***active*** involvement in IEP development and review, and (2) little or no information received regarding student progress and changes made in child's IEP during the course of the year. One parent appeared to capture the sentiment of both groups when she said, "We want to be equal partners in the IEP process. Our input should have equal weight with child study team members and vocational educators." The recommendations offered in Table I suggest several strategies for enhancing the role of parents in the IEP process.

(continued)

TABLE I

Major Concerns of Parents and Recommendations for Improving IEP Process*

IEP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development of IEP	Many parents are not involved in development of IEP. They are asked to simply sign the completed document. Many parents stressed a need for more information concerning their roles and rights in the IEP process. A strong feeling voiced by many parents was that their children were being placed in programs based on available openings rather than on the child's aptitude or interest.	Conduct the initial team meeting at a time that permits both parents to participate, such as during the summer or in the evenings during the school year. Establish procedures and conditions whereby parents are, in fact, serving as partners with other IEP team members.
II. Implementation of Student's IEP	Parents are often not informed when significant changes are made in their child's IEP. Sometimes they don't find out about changes until the end of the school year or at the beginning of the following school year.	Inform parents of child's progress on a continual basis. In addition to child's vocational progress, the ongoing reports should include information concerning social and emotional adjustment. Establish greater flexibility in school curriculum to permit, when necessary, important changes in child's program.
III. Review of IEP	Several parents reported that although the IEP had been reviewed, the parents were not part of the process and were simply informed of the results.	Involve parents in review process. Greater likelihood of parent involvement if meeting is scheduled at a convenient time for all parties concerned. In addition to receiving information on what the child has accomplished, suggestions as to activities that parents may do to help the child progress would be helpful.

*Based on comments that surfaced in both parent group meetings. Comments that emerged in one group only appear in Appendix F.

Of particular note was the discussion of mainstreaming that surfaced in both parent groups. Many parents were unclear as to the meaning and implications of mainstreaming for their children. Because of this uncertainty, some parents (i.e., those who have had children in special self-contained programs) expressed ambiguous feelings concerning the move to place their children in a mainstream environment. Many parents, who had worked hard to get their children placed in special programs, were now being informed that their child may be moved back into the regular program. This change in direction was met with mixed emotions.

The concerns and recommendations cited in Table I represent those that were voiced in both parent group meetings. For additional concerns/recommendations which surfaced during the parent meetings, see Appendix F. A review of these items should more fully portray the sincere interests and deep

(continued)

concerns expressed during these sessions and also provide some helpful hints for enhancing parental support and involvement in the IEP effort.

Vocational Educator Concerns and Recommendations

The concerns and recommendations expressed in both vocational educator groups appear in Table 2. From these items, two primary areas of concern surfaced consistently: (1) a basic lack of knowledge of vocational education programs by those who formulate IEPs and (2) the vocational educator has had little or no contact with those responsible for formulating IEPs. A central recommendation was that time should be allocated for

TABLE 2

Major Concerns of Vocational Educators and Recommendations for Improving IEP Process*

IEP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development of IEP	Vocational teachers have little or no contact with child study team or the guidance department prior to the student being assigned to their classes. The vocational goals formulated by the IEP team are, in many cases, unrealistic, demonstrating limited knowledge of course requirements. Students are assigned or "dumped" according to what shop has an opening rather than based on assessment of student needs.	Sufficient time should be allocated for the vocational teacher to meet with IEP team prior to actual student assignment.
II. Implementation of Student's IEP	Few districts have the necessary communication system that enables the vocational teacher to report ongoing progress of the student to the IEP team. Once student is assigned a particular vocational program, few districts have exhibited the flexibility in scheduling to permit significant changes in student's IEP. Vocational educators need more inservice training to better serve special needs students.	Have a person with both special and vocational education background act as a liaison between vocational teacher and IEP team. Need greater flexibility in scheduling to avoid the problem of students being "locked in" a program; which basically results from decision makers being controlled by the computer. Have inservice meetings that include interaction between special and vocational educators.
III. Review of Student's IEP	The vocational teacher is usually not involved in the review process.	Schedule review meeting when vocational educator can attend. Consider including the cooperative education in the review meeting.

*These major concerns and recommendations were mentioned by vocational educators in both small group sessions. For a listing of concerns/recommendations that surfaced in one session only, see Appendix G.

the vocational educator to become a participating member of the IEP team.

(continued)

Moreover, two other recommendations were discussed in the sessions. The first being the vocational educator's interest in receiving further training related to educating special needs students. And second, the vocational educators desire for increased interaction with special education personnel.

Additional concerns and recommedations that emerged during the vocational educator group sessions are listed in Appendix G.

Child Study Team Member Concerns and Recommendations

In contrast to parents and vocational educators, child study personnel have an assigned responsibility for developing IEPs within each school district. The major areas of concern and recommendations for strengthening the IEP process are identified in Table 3.

As suggested by the statements in Table 3, the concerns of child study personnel appear to concentrate in the following areas: (1) a need for performance-oriented vocational assessment, (2) a need for closer articulation between vocational and academic program; between sending school and area vocational-technical school personnel, and (3) the need for systematic and coordinated procedures for monitoring the student's IEP.

Further concerns/recommendations expressed by the child study members are shown in Appendix H. A number of specific recommendations are provided. One recommendation, for example, was that workshops for parents, child study, and vocational

TABLE 3

Major Concerns of Child Study Team Members and Recommendations for Improving IEP Process*

IEP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development of IEP	Limited vocational assessment other than pencil and paper test. Most sending districts have little idea as to requirements for a given vocational program. The vocational teacher is generally not involved in the initial development of the IEP.	Institute a viable vocational assessment program staffed with qualified personnel. Allocate sufficient time, prior to student assignment, for the vocational teacher to meet with the child study team.
II. Implementation of Student's IEP	There is limited use made of community resources. There is practically no communication between the vocational program and related academic areas. There is little or no feedback from the shared-time or full-time vocational programs to the sending districts, consequently, no viable modification can be made on the IEP during the school year.	There is a need for a mandate in the county plan stressing Employment Orientation (EO) Programs for the handicapped, viable alternatives to regular vocational programs, and communication between all personnel involved in the IEP process. There needs to be continual progress reports from the vocational school to the child study team concerning the student's progress—these reports should contain information that would be of value to the child study team when they are considering modifications in the student's IEP.

(continued)

TABLE 3 *(continued)*

EIP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
III. Review of Student's IEP	There is disagreement as to whether the vocational school or the sending district has overall responsibility for the student's placement.	If outside placement is being considered, the cooperative industrial education (CIE) III coordinator should be involved in the review process.

*Based on comments that surfaced in both child study team group meeting. Comments that emerged in one group only appear in Appendix H.

personnel should be initiated on the county level in order to increase communication among these groups and to strengthen cooperative planning ventures.

IEP TEAM SESSIONS

Procedures

The team sessions (Session III) followed the individual team member meetings. There were two basic intents of the team sessions: (1) to continue discussion of IEP development as viewed as a team process, identifying areas in need of improvement and (2) to share existing practices and concerns with teams from comparable settings.

The fifteen teams were divided into four groups, with each group consisting of four teams (one group was comprised of three teams). The groups were arranged so that teams from similar settings met with one another. Like the preceding individual sessions, each group was led by a facilitator, while a session recorder noted pertinent concerns and recommendations. The recording format presented in Appendix E was also used during the team sessions.

A series of guiding statements, which moved the groups through the three stages of the IEP process (i.e., initial development, implementation, review), was provided each group. These statements can be found in Appendix I.

Team Concerns and Recommendations

The major concerns and recommendations that surfaced during the IEP team meetings are listed in Table 4. In comparing these with major concerns/recommendations of individual members (as shown in Tables 1 through 3), two basic and recurring concerns became apparent:

1. **a need for increased communication and understanding among those who are involved in planning and delivering the student's educational program, and**

2. **a need for establishing the procedures and time necessary for developing an appropriate IEP for each handicapped student.**

These themes are further reinforced by the statements that appear in Appendix J.

(continued)

TABLE 4

Major Concerns and Recommendations from IEP Teams*

IEP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development	Vocational assessment is, to a great extent, nonexistent. Child study team members lack adequate knowledge of not only the requirements for a given vocational program but also which vocational programs are available. Time is not sufficiently allocated for all affected persons (e.g., vocational teacher, parents, special education teacher) to fully participate in the IEP process.	An individual with a combination of special education and vocational education should be made a part of the child study team to act as a resource and liaison person in the IEP process. Communication and understanding needs to be improved through increased inservice opportunities in which vocational teachers and child study team members can work together. Time should be alloted, prior to the beginning of the school year, for the parents to meet with the child study team and all their children's teachers.
II. Implementation	Time is presently not available for the child study team to meet with the parents and teachers during the school year. Meetings normally occur only if there is a crisis situation. Changes are often made in the student's vocational program without the knowledge of either the child study team or the parent.	If the student is in a full-time vocational program, the vocational school should write the IEP. Build in flexibility of scheduling so that, if need be, a child's program may be changed significantly during the school year.
III. Review	There is presently no time to organize and implement a good annual review especially for the child who is attending school away from the sending district. Budget caps affect the amount of funds available for the child study teams and related services. The amount of paper work involved trying to review all IEP's at year's end has a negative effect on the quality of the annual review.	Encourage reporting from the vocational school that will facilitate the review process. A reporting by letter grades only is inadequate.

*The concerns/recommendations listed here were identified by two or more groups during the IEP team sessions. For a listing of additional concerns/recommendations discussed in one of the four groups, see Appendix J.

OBSERVATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SESSIONS

SECTION 4

The last session of the conference consisted of observations of the individual and team meetings by two persons, Dr. Grace Bingham and Dr. May W. Huang. Both are faculty members of the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University. Dr. Bingham is in the Department of Educational Psychology, and Dr. Huang is in the Department of Vocational-Technical Education.

In organizing this conference, the planning committee wanted two persons to observe the small groups in action, capture the dominant themes of the day, and share these with the conference group. As indicated by the following presentations, Drs. Bingham and Huang skillfully met the challenge.

Perspectives of a Special Educator

Grace Bingham
Assistant Professor, Special Education
Department of Educational Psychology
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University

As an "observer" of the morning and afternoon small group sessions, let me begin by making one or two general observations. First, I was impressed with how hard you worked during the course of this day! You started off in the morning by being a bit guarded with each other, but as the day progressed, you gradually began to interact spontaneously, and by the end of the afternoon, you actually left off identifying problems and began looking for solutions. That says much about the groups' willingness to grapple with the issues under consideration. Secondly, I felt that people were speaking not from a hypothetical standpoint but from a base of genuine interest originating largely from their own experiences with the IEP process.

Central Themes

What I attempted to do was listen for recurring themes that seemed to over-arch the specific content in each sub-group. I found a number of such themes which I shall discuss first before touching on some topics addressed by individual groups.

Need for Active Participation in IEP Process

One theme which I heard all day was that of *active participation* in the IEP process. The legislative impetus which gave rise to IEPs was intended to encourage active participation rather than passive consent from all parties; professionals, parents, and where appropriate, children, as well. I see as one of the primary needs related to that theme, the need to clarify what is meant by active participation. You began to do that today. As you talked, I noted that most of you were well informed about the topics under discussion, and that made me wonder if you did not represent a "select" group simply by virtue of your attendance at this conference. I wonder if your level of information is representative of what might be expected of most vocational educators, parents, and child study teams? If it is, then I feel optimistic about how far we have progressed in our knowledge of IEPs in the past year. Even though most of you know what an IEP is, and what it is intended to accomplish, you still have questions about procedural steps in the implementation and monitoring processes.

As many of you stated, one way in which active participation can be clarified is through better communication within and across groups. Communication involves both talking and listening. I observed people doing quite a bit of talking. I would like to raise a question about whether there was an equal proportion of listening. Since listening means trying to get into the frame of reference of the other

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person, I wonder how much we heard of what others were saying to us.

Let me start with parents. I heard parents saying, "...we want to be active participants... we know we have the 'right,' but it isn't rights we are referring to. What we have not often sensed is that we are a welcome part of the process." Parents then reported some of their experiences with child study teams that give them their feeling of distance. They referred to the use by professionals of educational jargon, or, in effect, the use of a different language system. They also described some seating arrangements at IEP conferences that inhibited collaboration (professionals seated on one side of the table, parents on the other).

On the other hand, I heard child study team members tell how they had attempted time and time again to get some parents to attend IEP conferences and had received no response.

Vocational educators, too, mentioned their desire to feel like full participants and voiced their concern that sometimes decisions are made about vocational programming by child study teams without consultation with vocational educators. While child study team members have the responsibility for placement decisions, those decisions should be based on accurate knowledge about appropriateness of certain vocational programs for particular individuals. There is no question that vocational educators can provide that information, but perhaps child study team members are seeking something that goes beyond the information level. I sense that their interpretation of active participation by vocational educators is the willingness of educators to look at their programs and begin to see what they can modify or what they can adapt to make those programs applicable to a wider range of handicapped and special needs students.

I was pleased to hear today that a few districts have progressed to a level where they are using s systematic task analysis approach to vocational behavior, as well as a carefully documented monitoring and reporting procedure.

Inservice Education

Another prevalent theme today was that of *inservice education.* I heard individuals struggle with a problem, and then conclude that it probabley could be solved through more inservice education. I want to share with you just a few thoughts on inservice education. Certainly no one would dispute that educators, as well as other professional groups, benefit from continuing development of their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. But, some current ideas and practices of inservice education trouble me. I am afraid we again may be making the same mistakes about how people learn that we have made many times in the past. First, the present delivery systems of inservice appear to be giving over-attention to dispensing information and insufficient attention to modes of delivery that will develop skills and attitudes. Conferences, workshops, symposia, or lectures are compatible modes for acquisition of information or knowledge. But, acquiring skills requires day to day working experiences, or what vocational educators might call a "hands on" approach. That approach is harder to find in inservice education models for it implies the observation of practice and its analysis in order to develop and improve skills. Practice is, however, a necessary part of learning new behaviors and incorporating them into one's teaching.

The second troubling aspect of inservice education is that it has come to be interpreted as that which one group (knowledge "dispensers") gives to another group (knowledge "receivers"). In this case, it is what special education "knows" and "gives" to all other groups. The implications of such an interpretation are inaccurate on two counts. First, there is an implied disparity of status between special educators and other educators, with special educators cast in the role of "experts." And, second, there is an implied uniqueness of knowledge, or a body of information which is the province of special education and to which others will now be privy.

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If the outcome of inservice education is to help all professionals improve their ability to deliver service to handicapped students, then inservice education must be seen as a collaborative **search** or **exploration** between special education and other professionals.

Today I approached themes from the perspective of a special educator and trainer of special education personnel. But, having been a child study team member in years past, I can still relate to the problems child study teams cite in the recent increase of paper work and other procedures required to stay in compliance with new rules and regulations. I can also sympathize with parents who call me at the University Evaluation Center and are distressed because of their difficulty in dealing with the educational system. Which brings me to my next point...as part of communication, another important topic that needs to be clarified is the relationship between special education and vocational education and their possible differences.

The Relationship Between Special and Vocational Education

I sense that there is still a gap between vocational educators and special educators when each talks about achieving "goals." This morning, Tom McNulty referred to the goal of vocational education as preparing individuals to get and hold a job in line with interests, aptitudes, and abilities.

Understandably, vocational educators have an investment, emotional and otherwise, in seeing their programs succeed and in maintaining a high level of quality. At times, however, that commitment to "program" appears to divert the focus from the individual who requires special attention and to result in some vocational educators being viewed by special educators as "inflexible" or "rigid." I believe if those feeling exist, they can be dealt with best if brought out in the open and discussed rationally by the people involved. You seemed to be skirting some of the more "touchy" or delicate issues in the large groups, but I can understand why. It takes longer than one session to acquire a rapport within a group and a level of trust which will make members comfortable enough to say to each other, "You know, this is what really bothers me about your group..." and to exchange on that level.

Another issue for potential misunderstanding between vocational educators and special educators is agreeing on what it takes to make a special education student ready for employment. Vocational educators were saying today that experiences to develop vocational skills should begin early in the student's school life. There would be little argument from special educators on that point. But the problem of employability of special students has been not with their level of skill acquisition as compared with normally developing students, but with their inability to hold a job because they lack other requisite employability behaviors. Special education has been aware of the problem for over thirty years. What has change in the interim is the advent of career education which has served to emphasize the need for providing special students with sequential, integrated, developmentally appropriate experiences about their abilities, interests, and aptitudes in addition to skill acquisition. Now, the remaining issue is for educators to recognize that responsibility for achieving the goal of employability for the handicapped is a shared one. The concept of "collaborative effort" is warranted in tackling this important problem.

Concluding Observations

I will conclude by listing two set of observations, one of which I call *causes for concern*, and the other *reasons for optimism*.

Causes for Concern

I am concerned about what I note to be an adversarial relationship between some child study teams and parents. There is still too much of a "we-they" climate between these two groups. It seems almost paradoxical that in some situations the introduction of IEPs has operated to increase tensions rather than ease them. Perhaps it is the procedural issues and not the philosophical ones that still separate the groups. If so, then maybe after the whole IEP process has been in effect a while longer, many of the

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current problems will have resolved themselves. In the meantime, however, I think it is probably better to acknowledge tension when it exists and address it directly.

I am also concerned about what appears to be an over-zealous, and sometimes misguided attempt by some districts to mainstream all handicapped students. The fact that a school district has a policy that encourages mainstreaming should not be interpreted as an expectation that all handicapped students must be mainstreamed. Each decision should be based on sound, documented evidence of its appropriateness for the individual, with adequate consideration having been given to his/her developmental readiness for a mainstreaming experience.

The gap that still exists between what are called vocational skills and basic skills (reading, math, oral and written expression) concerns me. The fact that they are seen as separate components perpetuates the misconception that learning can be compartmentalized into "work" behaviors and "academic" behaviors. I believe we must be much more creative in weaving the two into integrated programs that emphasize the relationship of one to the other.

Reasons for Optimism

Now, my reasons for optimism. I was pleased to note that no one today spoke about special education students in stereotypic terms. In discussions, I did not hear references to the "EMRs" or the "NIs" or any other category as if it constituted a homogeneous population. I believe it shows that there has been progress in this state in accepting and affirming the individuality of handicapped students.

I am also optimistic about what I noted to be a better understanding of the distinction between IEPs as product and as process. Today you focused, and very appropriately so, on the processes involved in development, implementation, and monitoring. By doing so, you demonstrated that the collaborative effort this conference was designed to promote did indeed take place.

Perspectives of a Vocational Educator

May W. Huang
Assistant Professor
Department of Vocational-Technical Education
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University

I would like to first give you some idea of what I will attempt to do and then try to make my observation short and simple; because I think that all of you have done so much thinking and communicating in one day that by now you are probably exhausted.

Usually when I receive an assignment I try to find out exactly what I'm supposed to do. Being foreign born, I depend on a dictionary quite a bit. According to the dictionary, when I am asked to "observe" I am to follow, listen, watch closely, organize, and analyze the information collected and then present my impression to my target audience. I'll try to do just that rather than sharing with you my personal biases and opinions.

Before I present my impression to you, I think you need to know which field groups I have listened to, observed, and watched closely. In the morning I followed parents group B, child study team A, and vocational teacher group B. In the afternoon I observed teams 1 and 2.

General Impressions

Let me try to share with you a general impression of the entire conference before presenting the felt needs some of you have expressed quite clearly throughout the conference.

First, I saw an attentive audience. I was impressed that, even to the end of the day, everybody was still so alert. I just wish that my students could be here to watch you all. As an instructor, I couldn't help but say to myself that I need to develop the skills of my students so that eventually they could be so attentive.

The second thing I saw was concerned individuals. I heard positive sharing, constructive suggestions, thought-provoking questions. However, I didn't hear too many answers to most of the questions raised, which could mean that we have a lot of thinking and work that still needs to be done.

Third, I perceive a sense of direction among most people in the groups that I have observed. We seemed to know where we want to get to. But, we didn't seem to have the exact idea on how we might be able to get there. I think we probably know what we need to do, but we don't have the best strategy to accomplish what needs to be done. And many of us seemed to have the feeling of relief and fulfillment to have the opportunity to just sit down and think through all the concerns we have had for the past several years.

Specific Impressions

I have shared with you my general observations of the total atmosphere of the conference; I would like to share with you what I have compiled as to your felt needs. I'll start with the parents group and then follow with observations of child study members and vocational educator concerns.

Parents

Many felt needs have been expressed by the parents. First, many parents here today feel that other parents are not as well informend as those who have had the opportunity to participate in this conference. So they feel there is a need of increasing the effort of informing as many parents as possible of their rights and obligations in the total process of the IEP.

Secondly, the parents feel the need of involving more than just one parent when the IEP is put together

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for their child. At times, other family members can also be an important factor in the effective implementation and evaluation of the IEP plan.

Third, they see the need for parents having the opportunity to hash over their concerns with IEP team members before the formal IEP process begins for their child. This is important because most parents don't feel comfortable enough to work with a child study team the first time they meet together in a formal setting.

Additionally, the parents feel that they need to know how to cope with their psychological frustration with the handicapped child. They need help, they don't know where to get necessary help for them to overcome certain feelings such as fear, guilt, and anxiety. They didn't suggest, however, that educators be the ones to help them directly; although educators could assist by referring parents to possible sources of aid.

Another area of felt need of the parents is that they want a realistic education for their child. They want the type of education that carefully takes into consideration the strengths as well as the limitations of their child. They feel that they know their child the best. But, for years, programs have been prescribed for their child without taking into consideration the inputs of parents.

The parents also feel the need to have greater access to vocational education programs; going beyond those that are available just within their own school district. Oftentimes, the parents have become frustrated because many of them can't find the type of vocational education that has been prescribed for their child in the district where they live.

Finally, the parents feel the need for having constant feedback from educators, letting them know how well their child progresses within the prescribed learning environment. Many of them feel that only the assertive parents get to know what is going on in the school with their child. They really need to be informed on a continuous basis in order to work more closely with the school in helping their child.

Up to this point I have shared with you my impression as to the felt needs of the parents. These needs must be verified and addressed sufficiently if we, as educators, want to have some degree of success in accomplishing the goal of the IEP effort; that is, helping the handicapped child to learn in the best way the child can.

Child Study Team Members

The next group of concerns was expressed by members of the child study teams. Many of them seem to have all the answers but not the resources necessary to carry out the work they think needs to be done. Some of the child study team members did state the need to have a better knowledge of the available vocational education programs in order to make proper recommendations for the handicapped child under consideration. I have the impression that many of them know very little about vocational education. If this is so, then I think vocational educators need to get busy with the task of informing our colleagues about vocational education programs and practices.

In addition, some child study team members have expressed their frustration in complying with the law; which apparently has created a tremendous amount of documentation and paper work. They think that they know what is the best way to implement the IEP process. But, they lack the needed resources and manpower to accomplish all the work which needs to be done. Their level of frustration in this area seemed to be high and no feasible solution was found in today's conference.

Many child study team members also feel the need of having inservice training if for no other reasons than to get together to share ideas, to learn what's going on, and to find out different approaches in implementing the IEP process. Many child study members seem to think that through attending inservice sessions they can make sure that they are working toward the right direction and making good

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progress. I think no matter what we do, it is important for us to have a sense of accomplishment. I have the impression that, up to this point, the IEP process itself has not had a built-in reward system for those who are directly involved. I hope that's not the situation. If it is, then something must be done; for any process cannot be effective until it has a satisfactory reward system.

Vocational Educators

Do the vocational educators have felt needs similar to child study members? The answer to this question is "not entirely." Let me share with you my impression as to the felt needs of the vocational educators.

Many vocational educators expressed a strong need to be involved in IEP development from the very beginning and throughout the entire IEP process; but, especially during the evaluation of the child's ability stage. They think that an evaluation of the child's ability in a similated work situation is most essential. Such evaluation, they believe, can help the child study team members obtain better insight as to the possibility for a child to be able to function adequately in certain work situations before a particular vocational education program is prescribed for the child. Furthermore, such evaluation allowes the vocational teachers to have a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each child being sent to their classroom.

Similar to the child study team members, vocational educators feel the need of having inservice training. The content of the inservice training, however, needs to concentrate on understanding the unique needs of individual handicapped youngsters and implementing appropriate instructional strategies.

A Call for Individual Action

I have attempted to share with you some of my impressions of today's conference and some of the felt needs expressed by many of you sitting here. As I listened, observed, and followed you today, I have noticed one underlying assumption which concerns me tremendously. It seems to me that many of us make the assumption that some body else has to initiate and do something but not me. Such mentality needs to be changed before progress can be made in helping handicapped youngsters in our schools. Fortunately, and in spite of the fact that lack of financial resources looms heavily on our minds, creative ideas were generated in today's conference. I would like to challenge all of us to follow through with some of our own creative ideas. After this conference is over, we must captialize on the good thought and work which surfaced during today's activities. I suggest that each of us choose one good idea from the conference and follow it through in our own work. If most of us sitting here can do that, then the conference will have been worth the effort.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The concerns and recommedations expressed by the participants of the May 17 conference suggest rather clearly that the IEP effort, when viewed as a process for involving key persons in the design and delivery of individualized programs for handicapped students in vocational education, is beset by many shortcomings. Parental and vocational educator concern over the lack of active involvement in IEP development and the child study team member's feeling of spending an inordinate amount of time on paperwork chores are but a few of numerous problems reportedly hindering IEP efforts in many local school districts.

The conference format and organization presented an opportunity to synthesize these problems into one or more central themes. Two related themes emerged.

First, it appears that the IEP requirement is all too often approached as another series of forms to be completed; rather than as a process for collectively establishing the most appropriate program for each handicapped student. It is possible that the specificity of the IEP requirement has fostered an emphasis on the documentation functions of IEP development; an emphasis that would appear to be overshadowing the intent of the federal legislation.

Second, and perhaps more important, the IEP process as a whole seems to be suffering from a shortage of solid educational management. On one hand, the symptoms of inadequate systematization emerge, such as the lack of agreement as to process goals and methodologies, inadequate articulation between key personnel (e.g., parents, vocational educators, child study personnel), a lack of delineated individual responsibilities and an absence of ongoing follow-up and evaluation. On the other hand, symptoms of excessive systematization surface, such as inflexible meeting schedules, students unable to change programs at mid-year, legalistic interpretation of requirements and the tendency to emphasize minimum requirements. Additional examples of these two patterns are possible. But, one thing is apparent; proper management is at the crux of the issue, and issue which transcends simple budgetary concerns.

Given that many of the identified problem areas are manifestations of the two central themes discussed here, the opportunity is present for more creative solutions.

Up to this point, much attention has been devoted to the difficulties associated with current IEP practices. However, one of the most striking aspects of the May 17 conference was the intense interest of the participants in the IEP effort and an obvious desire for seeing the process work more effectively. This was, in itself, and encouraging sign and should be capitalized on by those who are responsible for the IEP effort in our local school districts. A quick review of the many concerns and recommendations generated by the participants of our one-day conference would suggest that similar activities conducted at the local school district level could yield positive and practical suggestions for strengthening collaborative activities among IEP members and, utlimately, help in achieving the goal of providing an appropriate educational program for each handicapped student.

A need for IEP team members to be more aware of and sensitive to the various vocational program options within their school district was voiced by the conference participants. More specifically, many parents said they simply were not aware of these program options; several child study team members saw the need for a better understanding of the content and requirements of individual vocational course areas; and most vocational educators felt that those who were making recommendations for vocational program placement were often doing so with little or no knowledge of vocational programming. Suggestions for addressing these individual needs were offered by the participants and appear elsewhere in this report (Section 3). These concerns do, however, appear to represent an area in which higher education institutions and the state department of education could play an important role.

(continued)

Teacher education institutions could, through both preservice and inservice programming, make a deliberate effort to increase the understanding of prospective and current child study team personnel of vocational education programming. A preservice/inservice thrust could also be targeted for vocational education personnel, with an emphasis on the vocational educator's role in the IEP process. Likewise, if parents are to function as equal partners on the IEP team, then instructional programs which focus on vocational education programming and parental rights, roles, and responsibilities in the IEP process certainly appear to be in order. The bureaus of special and vocational education in the state department could jointly promote these thrusts and provide technical assistance along the way.

Lastly, the members of the conference planning committee saw the May 17 event as a systematic attempt to determine the status of IEP development in vocational education across the state. The information collected during this conference was seen as providing a framework for subsequent action. It follows, then, that this committee should reconvene to analyze the outcome of the May 17 conference and identify the strategies and resources necessary to implement a comprehensive and coordinated plan for strengthening individualized education programs for handicapped students enrolled in New Jersey's vocational education delivery system.

APPENDIX A

CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SUPPORTIVE AGENCIES

CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SUPPORTIVE AGENCIES

Dean Garwood
Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation
N. J. State Department of Education

William Friedel
Division of School Programs
N. J. State Department of Education

Richard Ruebling
Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation
N. J. State Department of Education

David Winikur
Division of School Programs
N. J. State Department of Education

Paul Mozenter
N. J. Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel (NJAVESNP)

Leonard Albright and Thurman Hux
Department of Vocational-Technical Education
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INVITATION

LETTER OF INVITATION

Dear

On Thursday, May 17, 1979, the *New Jersey Invitational Conference on Serving Handicapped Students in Vocational Education: A Collaborative Effort* will be held at Rutgers University. This conference will involve teams of child study team representatives, vocational education instructors, and parents from selected educational agencies in New Jersey in: (1) identifying current practices and problems related to implementing individualized education programs (IEP's) in vocational education, and (2) recommending strategies for improving the IEP effort. A more detailed description of this conference is enclose for your review.

We, the members of the conference planning committee, are pleased to extend an invitation to your school district to participate in this important conference. We believe that your experience and expertise in developing individualized education programs for handicapped students in vocational education will bring a special dimension to our conference. Your participation will contribute to an indepth examination of the IEP effort and help us explore possible strategies for strengthening the IEP process in school districts throughout the State of New Jersey.

We ask that you identify a team of three persons to attend our invitational conference. Your team is to consist of: (1) a representative from the child study team, (2) a vocational education instructor, and (3) a parent. Since the intent of this conference is to identify practices and problems associated with the IEP effort in vocational education, we request that the persons selected to represent your school district have knowledge of and prior involvement in the IEP process and be willing to share their expertise in small group work sessions.

There is no registration fee for conference participation, and lunch will be provided for participants through conference funds. We do ask that you confirm your participation by completing the enclosed team registration form and returning it no later than May 2, 1979. Also enclosed is a return addressed envelope for your convenience. Additional information (e.g., conference agenda, directions to conference site) will be forwarded to each participant approximately one week prior to the conference date.

We look forward to receiving your team confirmation information and to working with you on May 17, 1979.

Sincerly yours,

Leonard Albright
Chairperson, Invitational Conference
Planning Committee

NEW JERSEY INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SERVING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Effective implementation of the handicapped student's individualized education program (IEP) in vocational education is based on the coordinated activities of child study team members, parents, and the vocational instructors. This conference will involve these persons in exploring strategies for strengthening the IEP effort for handicapped individuals enrolled in vocational education.

DATE AND LOCATION: May 17, 1979
Milledoler Hall, Queens Campus, Rutgers University New Brunswick, New Jersey

OBJECTIVES:
(1) Examine the collaborative efforts of IEP teams in several New Jersey school districts
(2) Identify current practices and concerns related to collaborative planning
(3) Recommend strategies for facilitating collaborative efforts, including suggestions for future inservice directions.

PARTICIPANTS: Eighteen (18) three-member teams from local school districts across the state will be invited to this conference. Each team is to consist of a parent, a representative from the child study team, and a vocational instructor.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES: In addition to providing a forum for examining needs, issues, and strategies for coordinated programming in vocational education, the conference proceedings will be published and made available to state and local administrators of vocational programs for handicapped students and to staff development personnel.

THIS CONFERENCE WAS PLANNED IN COOPERATION WITH:

N. J. State Department of Education Bureau of Special Needs Programs
Division of Vocational Education and Career Preparation
and
Branch of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services
Division of School Programs

N. J. Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel (NJAVESNP)

Rutgers University
Department of Vocational-Technical Education
Department of Special Education

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Leonard Albright
Department of Vocational-Technical Education
Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University
10 Seminary Place, New Brunswick, N. J. 08903
(201) 932-7937

Please return to Leonard Albright by May 2, 1979

TEAM REGISTRATION FORM

N. J. Invitational Conference
Rutgers University
May 17, 1979

School District Name: _____

Team Contact Person: _____

The team members representing our district are: *(Please include name and complete address)*

Child Study Team Representative:

_____

_____
(position)

_____

_____

Parent:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Vocational Education Instructor:

_____

_____
(position)

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

ROSTER OF CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

ROSTER

N. J. INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SERVING HANDICAPPED STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

INVITED TEAM PARTICIPANTS

DISTRICT	PARENT	VOCATIONAL PERSONNEL	CST PERSONNEL
Bergen County Voc-Tech. School 200 Hackensack Avenue Hackensack, N. J. 07601	Olga Gardner	Richard Ziegler	Gregory Walters
Burlington County Special Services Route 130 Burlington, N. J. 08016	Dorothy Scott	David Anderson	Bruce Lovejoy
Camden County Voc-Tech. School P. O. Box 566 Berlin-Cross Keys Road Sicklerville, N. J. 08081	Betty Flanagan	Thomas DiTaranto	Barry Kardos Dave Doughty
Essex County Voc-Tech. School 90 Washington Street East Orange, N. J. 07017	Theresa DiMasi	Dominick DeCicco	Ralph Calderone
Ewing Township 1331 Lower Ferry Road Trenton, N. J. 08618	Betty Ann Brooks	Herman Mintz	Alice Mehlman Jim Morgan
Freehold Regional High School 303 West Main Street Freehold, N. J. 07728	Eleanor Wood	John McLean	Peter Weiss
Glassboro Public Schools Joseph L. Bowe Boulevard Glassboro, N. J. 08028	Helen Armstrong	Jeffrey Punda	Barbara Raines
Middlesex County Voc-Tech. School P. O Box 220 East Brunswick, N. J. 08816	Sharon Sullivan	D. Noreika	Brian Loughlin
Morris County Voc-Tech. School 400 East Main Street Denville, N. J. 07834	Evelyn Davis	Linda Stahl	Mikki Regan
Orange Public Schools 369 Main Street Orange, N. J. 07050	Patricia Juliano	Joseph Bonadeo	Mary Lewis
Paterson Public Schools 33 Church Street Paterson, N. J. 07505		Paulette Waite Geraldine Galioway	Arthur Godt
Raritan Valley Workshop			Margaret Peraldo
Roselle 710 Locust Street Roselle, N. J. 07203	Evelyn Skorinko	Ernest Cole	Maureen Brewster
Tri-County/East Orange 490 William Street Warren, N. J. 07060	Jessie Coffee	Ronald Greenberg	Richard Smith
Watchung Hills Reg. High School 108 Stirling Road Warren, N. J. 07060	Norm Woerner	Albert Szescink	Helen Smink
Woodbridge Township Administration Building P. O. Box 428 School Street Woodbridge, N. J. 07075	Maureen Riley	George Shapiro	Helen Melnick

GROUP FACILITATORS AND RECORDERS

Name	Role in Group Sessions	Position and Address
Rosiaria Aquilina	Recorder	Special Needs Teacher Belle Mead, N. J.
Gerald Coles	Recorder	Rutgers Community Mental Health Center Piscataway, N. J.
Ken Driver	Recorder	Special Needs Teacher Somerville, N. J.
Katie LaMar Gibson	Facilitator	County Supervisor of Child Study Somerset County
Robert Gray	Facilitator	County Supervisor of Child Study Ocean County
Mari Haupt	Facilitator	County Supervisor of Child Study Middlesex County
Thurman R. Hux	Facilitator	Graduate Assistant Rutgers University
John Knorr	Recorder	Career Education Coordinator Camden County
Jane Parker	Recorder	Graduate Student Rutgers University
Chrystal Schivell	Recorder	Graduate Student Rutgers University
Dick Scott	Facilitator	Liaison Coordinator of Child Study Coordinators N. J. State Department of Education
Joe Wilberscheid	Facilitator (a.m. session) Recorder (p.m. session)	Director of Special Education Freehold Regional School District

CONFERENCE REGISTRARS

Name	Role in Group Sessions	Position and Address
Phyllis Cohen	Registrar	Employment Orientation Teacher Paterson City Schools
Lorraine Polding	Registrar	Employment Orientation Teacher Paterson City Schools
Richard Summers	Registrar	Employment Orientation Teacher Paterson City Schools

APPENDIX D
GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBER SESSIONS

GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBER SESSIONS

IEP ACTIVITY	CST PERSONNEL	PARENT	VOCATIONAL PERSONNEL
Initial Development	A handicapped student is being considered for placement in vocational education. The child study team member is aware of the various vocational programs offered in the district and of the specific entrance requirements for these programs. The child study team member works with parents and the vocational teacher in determining student needs and in planning the student's IEP.	Parents are informed by the school that their child is being considered for placement in vocational education and are asked to serve as members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. As team members, the parents are asked to provide information about their child's career interests and previous work experiences. These parents work with the team in planning the child's educational program. Once developed, the parents are given a copy of the child's individualized program plan.	The vocational eduction teacher is notified that a handicapped student is being considered for placement in his/her program. This teacher is asked to serve as a member of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). As a member, the vocational instructor is involved in determining student needs and in planning the student's IEP.
Implementation of IEP	The child study team members, parents, and the vocational instructor meet at selected periods during the school year to discuss student progress in the vocational education setting and to determine if change in the student's program is necessary (e.g., additional services are needed, placement appears inappropriate).	Parents are kept informed of their child's progress in the vocational program during the school year and are involved in IEP team meetings when decisions are made regarding a change in the child's program.	The vocational instructor provides information on student progress to the IEP team members on a regularly scheduled basis and is involved in meetings that are held to discuss the student's program status.
IEP Review	The child study team along with parents and vocational instructor meet near the closing of the school year to review the student's IEP and to begin planning for next year's program.	The parents are involved in reviewing their child's program at the end of the year. The effectiveness of the child's program is discussed and specific recommendations are made for the following year.	The vocational educator meets with child study team members and parents near the end of the school year to review the students program and to begin planning for future educational options and/or employment possibilities for the student.

APPENDIX E

RECORDER'S LOG SHEET

Pg.#____of____

RECORDER'S LOG

Group Name _____

Time _____

Initial Development/Implementation/Review (Circle one)

Problems:	Priority	Code
	( )	( )
	( )	( )
	( )	( )
	( )	( )

Recommendations for Improvement:

	( )	( )
	( )	( )
	( )	( )
	( )	( )

Code: A - comprehensive high school
B - comprehensive high school/private school
C - special service district
D - area vocational school (shared-time)
E - area vocational school (full-time)

APPENDIX F
ADDITIONAL PARENT CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ADDITIONAL PARENT CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

IEP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development	There is little, if any, vocational assessement used to indicate what is the best vocational placement for the child. The parents are seldom questioned concerning the child's interests and hobbies at home. The parents feel the child study team does not listen to their input, that often the members are condescending. Parents feel that they should not have to fight to get the proper program for their child. Parents are uneasy that their protest over the IEP may cause negative consequences for the child.	The child study team should be more involved with the child, not just collecting and writing reports. More pre-vocational programs in the earlier grades. The parent should have an opportunity to meet personally with the teacher. Ask the child study team to treat the parents as equal partners. Write the IEP in a language that the parents can understand.
II. Implementation of Student's IEP	The vocational school progress report should have more information on the social needs of the child. Parents feel that sometimes their child is harasssed by other students at the vocational school. There is not enough flexibility in scheduling, when the child is not properly placed there is sometimes no way to get the schedule changed.	Inform the parents on a continual basis as to their child's progress. Give the child work that can be done at home. Allow the child to change programs during the year if the need is indicated. Establish programs to inform the parents of their rights.
III. Review of Student's IEP	The school does not help the child in getting placement or in getting help form other agencies after the child leaves school. No plans are made for next year until next year. The review meetings are too short with the main emphasis being on getting the child scheduled for next year.	Ask for parent input concerning any changes that have taken place at home. Inform the parents about activities that may be useful for their child during the summer. Don't just drop the child when they reach a certain age; the school should be responsible for continued assistance.

APPENDIX G

ADDITIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATOR CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IEP IMPROVEMENT

ADDITIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATOR CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IEP IMPROVEMENT

EIP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development	The vocational teacher is not allocated sufficient time to participate in the IEP meeting. The reporting form used by the vocational teacher limits the amount of input they can furnish. The vocational teachers are unhappy that they get a special needs student with no warning.	The district should mandate involvement on the part of the vocational teacher. The IEP should be written so that the vocational teacher can understand it. The vocational teacher or a vocational educator should be part of the assessment team.
II. Implementation	The vocational teachers have problems working with special needs students. Vocational teachers are forced to make modifications in the program without notifying everyone because of the time factor. The special needs student normally progresses at a different rate and sometimes causes problems in the classroom. The shop is not set up to handle special needs students. When a student fails, the vocational teacher is blamed even though the assignment may have been unrealistic to start with. The special education teacher will often not reinforce the actions of the vocational teacher. The special needs student oftentimes has problems with other students in the mainstream class.	Encourage vocational teacher to acquire background in special education. More pre-vocational training is needed before the special needs student is placed in a regular vocational setting.
III. Review	The vocational teacher is held responsible for placement, yet the assignment was often unrealistic to start with. The administration is unaware of the problems in placing special needs students. The reporting form has no place for the teacher to make comments. No work is done with the student over the summer and all knowledge is lost. No plans are made for next year—the vocational teacher receives another IEP at the beginning of the next school year without an opportunity for input.	Have a person responsible for coordinating the vocational program with the rest of the IEP.

APPENDIX H

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY CHILD STUDY PERSONNEL

47

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY CHILD STUDY PERSONNEL

EIP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development	Programs to acquaint the sending school child study team with information about the available vocational programs are virtually nonexistent. Parents are reluctant to have their child mainstreamed into a vocational program which they feel may be dangerous. Many districts do not require the recommended number of participants on the IEP team, as indicated in PL 94-142. The vocational evaluator usually represents the vocational teacher. Yet, this person normally has no vocational background. Viable program alternatives are practically nonexistent for the child not accepted in a vocational program. Some districts circumvent the child study team, with guidance personnel making the vocational assignment.	Institute more pre-vocational programs for special needs students. Arrange visits to the vocational school by the sending school child study team members.
II. Implementation	IEP vocational goals are usually unrealistic. The shared-time vocational school progress reports are seldom shared with sending districts. Some parents do not agree with mainstreaming concept. Little or no use is made of advisory councils. The vocational teacher often initiates change in the student's program without notifying the child study team. The vocational program is able to drop the student for little or no reason.	Need for workshops on a county level to bring together parents, child study team members, and teachers. The vocational schools should take over the responsibility of the IEP when the student is enrolled full-time at the vocational school. More contact is needed with outside agencies (vocational rehabilitation, CETA). More time must be allocated to the process of monitoring the IEP if it is to take place. The student should be more involved in the on-going review process—behavioral contracts should be made.
III. Review	The goals of the IEP are unrealistic when related to the world of work. The time of the meeting makes it difficult for the parents to come in. Parents are **not** included in some districts.	The meeting for both the review and the initial development should take place during the summer. Better reporting from the vocatiional school is needed to make the review process viable— not enough data is reported. More time needs to be alloted, perhaps during the summer. The reviews are all due at the same time. Consequently, it is difficult to do a thorough job on each IEP.

APPENDIX I

GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR TEAM SESSIONS

GUIDING STATEMENTS FOR TEAM SESSIONS

Initial Development of IEP	Implementation of IEP	IEP Review
A handicapped student is being considered for placement in a particular vocational education program. The parents and the appropriate vocational educator are asked to serve as members of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. As members of the IEP team, the parents, voctional instructor, and child study team members work together in determining appropriate placement and in developing the student's program plan.	Child study team members, parents, and vocational instructor meet at various points during the school year to discuss student progress and to determine if changes in the student's IEP are necessary.	Parents, vocational instructor, and child study members meet near the end of the school year to review the student's program and to make recommendations regarding future placement in education and/or employment settings.

APPENDIX J

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF IEP TEAMS

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF IEP TEAMS

EIP STAGES	CONCERNS	RECOMMENDATIONS
I. Initial Development	Teachers are not clear as to their role in the IEP process, nor are they sure as to who should be involved at the initial stage. Vocational offerings and opportunities are not always available for handicapped students when placement is being considered. There is little communication between shared-time area vocational schools and the sending districts. The parents are less involved in the initial development than in the implementation stage. The parents are often unsure as to the purpose and nature of mainstreaming.	Parents would like an outline and an agenda of the IEP meeting mailed to them prior to the initial meeting. Child study team at vocational school should write IVP—the sending district should be responsible for IEP.
II. Implementation	The sending school district child study team has, for the most part, no contact with the vocational teacher when the child is sent out of the district to the area vocational school. The vocational goals set by the child study team are frequently unrealistic. Vocational education teacher may not be receptive to working with handicapped student because he/she was not included in the initial development of IEP—IEP does not contain vocational education language.	Child study team member should be assigned to the vocational school for follow-up. Set aside regularly scheduled times for sending school district and area vocational school teachers, parents, and child study team members to meet. Parents should be asked to furnish information concerning situations at home affecting the child's progress at school. Sometimes decisions are made in a vacuum. Vocational education school should be mandated to send more detailed and accurate reports on student progress to the sending district.
III. Review	The parents do not normally attend the review. The vocational area is often ignored, or reviewed only by academic personnel. Extended time is needed by the child study team in order to do a more thorough job of annual IEP reviews.	Spread out the review over the course of the year. Develop an informal review process to be used during the school year. Hold the annual review meeting during the summer months.